(e) what is the amount so far provided to them?

THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING (SHRI G..K. VASAN): (a) and (b) The Indian National Shipowners' Association which represents Indian Shipping Companies holding 90% of the Indian tonnage has represented for creation of Rs.10,000 crore Corpus for providing credit facilities to Indian Shipping Companies for acquisition of ships as the recent global economic slow down has resulted in depressed earnings for shipping companies and credit crunch.

(c) to (e) Although, in the liberalization era Government is not committed to providing soft loans for acquisition of ships, at the behest of Finance Ministry, Indian Bank's Association had constituted a Working Group to examine the proposed extension of credit facilities to Shipping Companies in India for purchase of ships. Indian Bank Association has recently advised that they have no role to play in the matter and the Shipping Company should take up the matter with the individual banks. No soft loan could yet be provided to the Shipping companies.

Tax on corporate income

*159. SHRI MOHD. ALI KHAN: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India's tax on corporate income is a shade lower than that of the United States of America (USA); and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE): (a) and (b) In India, the income-tax on the income of a domestic company is levied at a flat rate of 30 per cent. Further, the income-tax so calculated is increased by a surcharge, if the total income exceeds Rs.1 crore. The surcharge is levied at the rate of 10 per cent of such income-tax in the case of a domestic company and at the rate of 2.5 per cent in the case of company other than a domestic company. Education Cess and Higher and Secondary Education Cess are also levied at the rate of 2 per cent and 1 per cent respectively. In the United States of America, the Federal income tax rates for Corporations vary from 15 per cent to 39 per cent, depending upon the amount of income and the slab in which such income falls.

Capacity enhancement of ports

*160. SHRIMATI T. RATNA BAI: Will the Minister of SHIPPING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the capacity of ports in the country would be increased to 1000 million tonnes from 750 million tonnes by the end of the current Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what are the areas covered in Andhra Pradesh especially for Visakhapatnam and Machhilipatnam?